

The Countywide Rural Plan

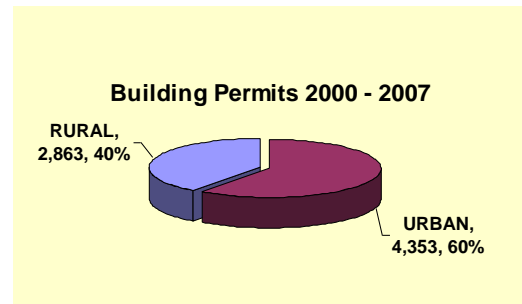
San Luis Obispo County

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING

A **Countywide Rural Plan** was authorized by the Board of Supervisors on July 15, 2008. With this official start, County planners will begin working with the public, defining the planning process and researching many topics such as those listed below.

The Land Use Element, a portion of the County General Plan, has not been comprehensively reviewed and updated in over 25 years. As San Luis Obispo County continues to attract new residents, a new regional, comprehensive and more efficient approach is needed now to address growth and resources. The Countywide Rural Plan will address region-related needs such as:

- The distribution of the region's "fair share" of affordable housing units as required by State regulations
- Shared constraints, especially water supply and major infrastructure deficiencies
- Agriculture, open space and habitat protection
- Growth areas around cities and towns
- Development around and between communities to maintain rural character and well-defined towns



Forty percent (40%) of all unincorporated residential development has been in rural areas outside communities.

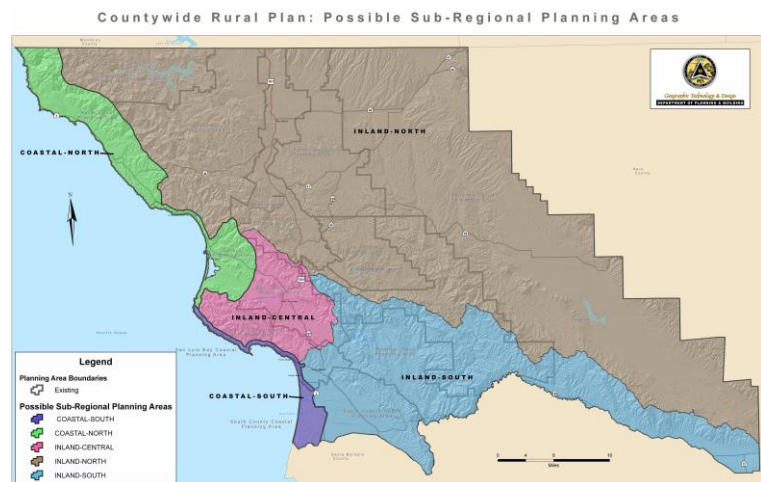
The Countywide Rural Plan will reorganize several documents:

The County Land Use Element, Land Use Ordinance, Coastal Plan Policies, and Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance.

Simplify the Plan

A major goal is to simplify the County's land use plans and ordinance:

- Combine the 15 area plans of the County Land Use Element (a part of the County General Plan) into a few sub-regional plans, as illustrated.
- Consolidate redundant ordinance standards between area plans.
- Make the land use plans and ordinance more concise and user-friendly.
- Reduce the time and costs to maintain the County's land use plans and ordinance.



Possible Sub-Regional Planning Areas

Regional Topics

1. Focus on countywide issues:

- Sustainable resources
- Infrastructure for development
- Transportation choices
- Housing for all incomes
- Employment areas
- Economic vitality for business
- Rural character and identity

Infrastructure: the large-scale systems, services, and facilities that are necessary for economic activity, including power and water supplies, sewage disposal, roads, schools, and telecommunications.

Sustainable resources: natural features such as water supply, soils or habitats for plants and animals, to be conserved so as to be viable for future generations.

2. Address growth more comprehensively:

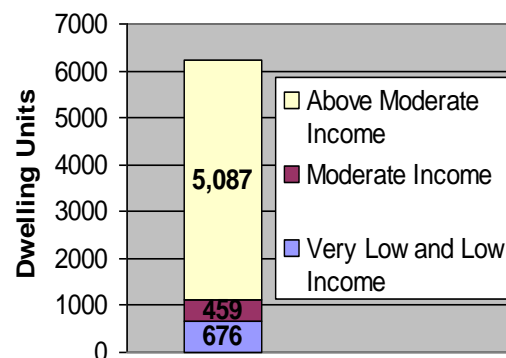
- Determine the needs of projected growth.
- Determine resource, infrastructure and service capabilities to serve development.
- Determine the growth capacities of cities and communities.
- Plan the most appropriate locations for growth.

3. Focus on agency cooperation:

- Collaborate with cities, communities and service districts on future growth planning.
- Coordinate with County departments and other agencies.

4. Implement the policies of the Conservation and Open Space Element and the Housing Element (now being updated), and the smart growth principles adopted by the Board of Supervisors

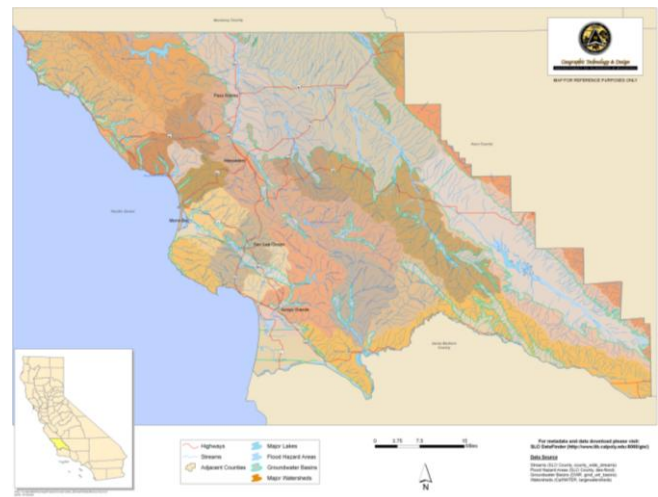
Housing Units in SLO County, 2001 - 2006



82 percent of the nearly 5100 homes built in unincorporated areas since 2001 were generally not affordable to households having very low, low or moderate incomes

Plan for Sub-regions

- Plan for sub-regions that are defined by watersheds.
- Determine local resource capacities.
- Identify appropriate areas for expansion of communities.
- Strengthen local economies.
- Create areas for employment near living areas.
- Limit inappropriate rural development, protect rural character and important agricultural, open space and natural resources.
- Maintain community separation for strong local identities.



Watershed areas

Work with Local Communities

Encourage each community to participate:

- Identify each community's interests in planning its future
- Identify each community's capacity for its share of regional projected growth
- Identify and plan suitable development areas for housing, commercial and job-generating uses next to communities, if appropriate
- Determine and plan for the necessary infrastructure for projected growth
- Identify enhancements needed to make complete communities

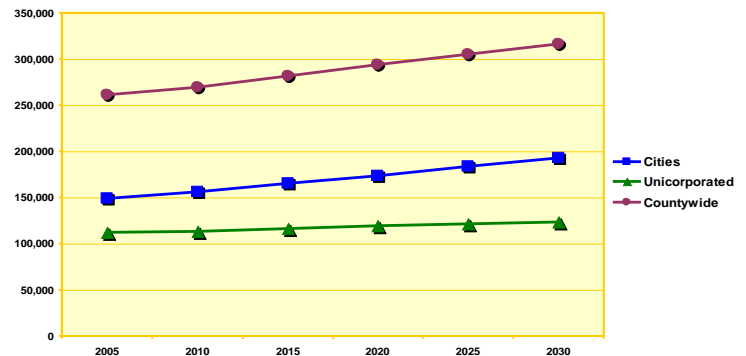


A planning workshop (SLOCOG Community 2050)

Work Plan Summary

2008-09

1. Work with the general public, interested organizations and stakeholders.
2. Research trends correlating growth demands to resource and infrastructure capacities.
3. Consolidate the existing planning areas and standards, reorganize and make other needed technical changes to documents in order to create the Countywide Rural Plan.



2008-2025 Projections, Countywide

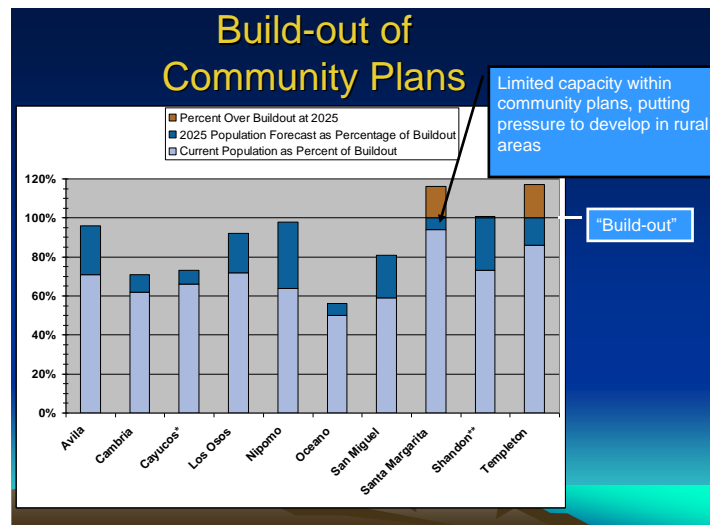
- Added Pop.: 35,000+
- Housing needed: 14,700+ dwelling units

2009-10

1. Continue outreach with the public, agencies, service districts and communities.
2. Prepare technical reports on feasible growth within resource and infrastructure capacities.
3. Working with communities and others, prepare regional, sub-regional and community policies for suitable growth.
4. Publish a Draft Countywide Rural Plan and other documents.
5. Begin the environmental review process of the draft documents.

2010-II

1. Prepare an integrated plan and environmental impact report
2. Planning Commission hearings
3. Board of Supervisors hearings and Coastal Commission hearings (for the Coastal Zone)

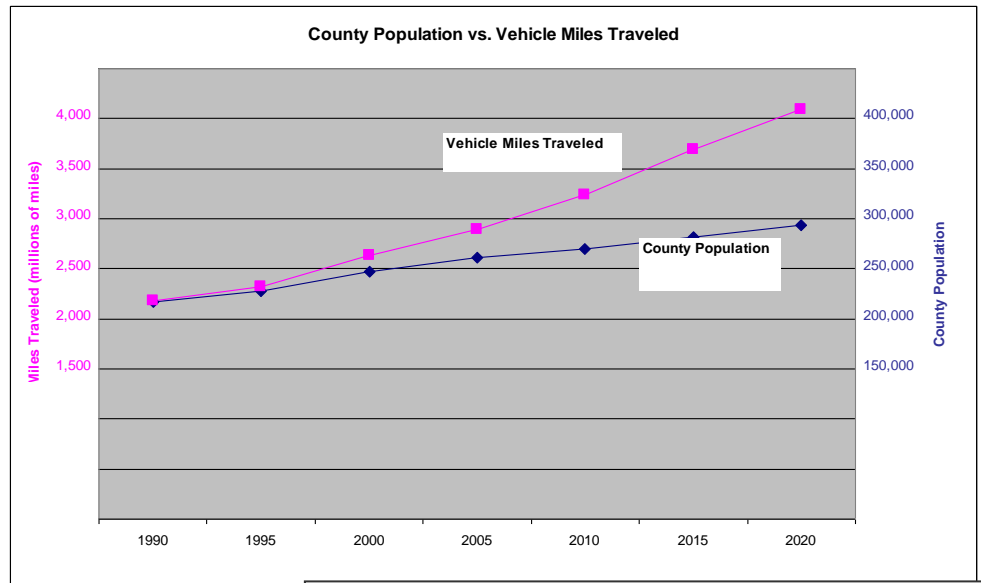


Benefits of Plan Reorganization

Easier to use and change: Consolidating and reorganizing area plans and policies will save time and money when it comes to updating those plans in the future. In addition, the new and reorganized documents will be more concise and easier to understand.

Stronger protection of resources, a vital economy and our quality of life: The Countywide Rural Plan will help avoid some of the impacts and costs of continuing the current growth trends and patterns that can result in:

- Depleted groundwater resources that require expensive solutions
- Loss of agricultural land and reduced tourism
- Increased costs for sheriff and fire protection
- Increased costs for rural road maintenance
- Increased infrastructure costs
- Impacted and lost biological resources
- Increased vehicle miles traveled, increased greenhouse gas emissions and reduced air quality
- Increased energy consumption
- Diminished rural character and separation between communities
- Loss of quality of life factors that most residents desire



- Traffic is increasing faster than population growth
- Funding is not expected to keep up

Learn More...and Be Involved:

Bulletins and updates will be available online, or by contacting the Department of Planning and Building. Ask to be included in a mail list for future announcements.

Online: www.sloplanning.org See Countywide Rural Plan

Contact: Mike Wulkan, Project Manager, (805) 781-5608; **Email:** mwulkan@co.slo.ca.us

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